



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Intermountain Region

324 25th Street
Ogden, UT 84401
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File Code: 1570-1

Date: January 2, 2013

Route To:

Subject: Reviewing Officer Recommendation, Golden Meadows Exploration Project, #13
04-12-0007-A215

To: Appeal Deciding Officer

This is my recommendation on disposition of the appeal filed by John Robinson, on behalf of Idaho Conservation League, protesting the Golden Meadows Exploration Project Decision Notice signed by Anthony Botello, District Ranger on the Krassel District of the Payette National Forest.

The District Ranger's decision authorizes the drilling of 178 holes (cores) on 139 drill pads in 26 drilling areas; construction of approximately 120 sumps; construction of up to 0.3 miles of temporary road; authorizes the re-opening and expansion of existing borrow source; the drilling of a redundant water well, pipe installation to transport water to private land and the construction of a well house; and the transportation of fuel along Forest Service routes for purposes of exploration of the proposed Golden Meadow project in the Stibnite area of the Payette National Forest, which is located within the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River watershed.

My review was conducted pursuant to, and in accordance with, 36 CFR 215.19 to ensure the analysis and decision is in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policy, and orders. The appeal record, including the appellant's objections and recommended changes, has been thoroughly reviewed. Although I have not listed each specific issue, I have considered all the issues raised in the appeal.

The appellant alleges violations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), the Organic Act, and its implementing regulations, and the Mining Law of 1872, among other requirements detailed in the appeal. The appellant requests that the Appeal Deciding Officer, vacate and remand the challenged actions.

RECOMMENDATION

I have reviewed the record for the project addressed above. I recommend the District Ranger's decision be reversed because additional information about closed well drilling systems is needed to verify the conclusions in the analysis.

Rowdy Muir
Appeal Reviewing Officer



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